"Mr. Nilakanta Pillai, I see your representation relates to the sale of *puduval* lands to non-Travancoreans. If it relates to a matter covered by paragraph 12 of my Address, I do not think it necessary for you to make the representation, because you may traverse the whole ground already discussed here."

The next subject for representation was 'The various aspects of the contemplated assignment of an extensive tract of land to a European company' by Mr. S. Subbaraya Aiyar (*Member, Municipal Council, Haripad*).* But before he began his representation, the Dewan said—

"Mr. Subbaraya Aiyar, if the subject of your representation is the same as that covered by paragraph 12 of my Address, I am afraid it would not be fair to the Assembly if I allow you to take up their time for discussing a subject that has already been disposed of."

MEMBER: I have nothing to say but to bow to your ruling and return, as it is not open to me to question your ruling. Nevertheless, I present an appeal to hear one side of the question at least.

DEWAN: It is not the question of hearing one side of the case. There is no *question* at all. The only question is whether tea lands exist in Travancore and as regards that, I have explained the position fully yesterday. So, I say, it is not fair to allow you to waste the time of the Assembly for nothing.

MEMBER: I only want to submit that it is a matter for extreme regret—

DEWAN: This is an Assembly which has seriously to deal with business matters in a business-like way and so it is not fair for me to ask them to waste their time on speculative ideas and fanciful notions.

MEMBER: I am not raising chimerical visions; nor was I going to build upon fanciful theories. Anyway, I bow to your decision.

DEWAN: Thank you.

7. Rent on Kandukrishi lands.

Mr. CHANDY THOMAS (*Member, Ambalapuzha taluk, Group I*) in conveying an expression of gratitude of the *Kandukrishi* tenants for the gracious act of Her Highness the Maharani Regent in commuting into money payment the *paattam* payable on *Kandukrishi* wet lands said that, although, by the commutation scheme, the difficulties and inconveniences experienced by the tenants had abated, they had not completely vanished as the rate of commutation fixed was high. The newspapers in the State and the representatives of the people congratulated the tenants on the benefits derived by the scheme without correctly ascertaining the local conditions and realising the real difficulties of the people. The commutation rate had been based mainly upon the statements made by Mr. K. K. Thomas in the Legislative Council and by the member for the Neyyattinkara taluk at the fourteenth session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. The wishes of the people at large had not been ascertained; and in order to attain fully the intended object, some more changes were necessary.

The first change needed was the reduction of the commutation rate. One of the items of loss incurred by the tenants under the system of payment in kind was under *alavu vasi* or allowances made for shortage in measuring paddy. Under the commutation scheme, there was no necessity to make this allowance. But the money required for payment of the *paattam* at the commutation rate could be raised only if the paddy given as *alavu vasi* was also sold. The average price in Kuttanad for the past five years was 16 chs. per *Kallurkadan para* while according to the commutation rate of 6 fanams per standard *para* the price would work out to 19¼ chs. The price would go down still further in future years with the increase in the quantity of paddy available. During certain periods of the year, the price would be high, but it would not be possible for the ordinary ryot to pay the rent in the first instance and store the paddy till the prices rose; nor would it be possible for him to borrow money for the payment of rent.

As regards the average market rate adopted by the Government as the basis for fixing the commutation rate, the member said that the highest price fetched by the sale of paddy from Government granaries was only 5½ fanams a *para*. The ordinary *nirak* rate prevailing in the markets or the rate adopted by the civil courts

* The member was allowed to speak on the 23rd February, 1927.

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would always be higher than the actual price. Further, the Government included the year 1095 as one of five years for which the average was worked out. In that year, the price was extraordinarily high because of the great European war. The price of paddy in Kuttanad then rose to 36 chs. a *para*, while at other times it was only 16 chs. In the circumstances, the rate of 6 fanams a *para* was very high and it should be reduced to 5 fanams a *para*. The loss in revenue on this account would be more than compensated by the savings under shortage in store, rent of granaries and cost of the *Kandukrishi* establishment.

His next prayer was for the change of the *kist* months from Medam and Edavam to Chingam, Kanni and Tulam as the price of paddy would be low in the months of Medam and Edavam.

In conclusion, the member said that he was only repeating what the ryots had already represented through memorials and resolutions at public meetings. The Government should not bring the scheme into force without reconsidering all aspects of the matter simply because a few ryots or representatives of the people had assented. The member was aware that the majority of the *Kandukrishi* tenants of Mavelikara and Kartikapalli had already accepted the commutation rate fixed by the Government. That was no criterion for accepting the rate because the conditions in those two taluks were different from those at Kuttanad where the price of paddy was much lower. Further, in the Mavelikara and Kartikapalli taluks the lands could be utilised for raising more than one cultivation annually, the crops were better and the rent comparatively lower.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Chandy Thomas, your suggestion now placed before the Government is in regard to the commutation, of the payment of tax in kind into payment in money, as per the current market rate. The Government were even more generous than you and have made the commutation on a rate below the market rate and fixed it at six fanams. You seem to suggest that the conditions of *Kandukrishi* lands in Kuttanad are very different from those in other places Let me assure you that the Government very carefully went into the whole question before fixing the rate. Anyway, the rate is subject to revision periodically, and so the revision of that rate will come up again soon.

In regard to the change of *kist* months, that is already engaging the attention of the Government, and the question has been referred to the Land Revenue Commissioner for his views. If possible, the Government will meet your wishes there.

As regards other points, I am awaiting certain reports. All your suggestions will be considered, although I am not now in a position to hold out any hopes.

8. Certain changes in the Revenue Administration.

MR. VARKI AIPORA (*Member, Vaikam taluk*) spoke about the necessity for changing the *kist* months from Tulam and Vrischikam to Vrischikam and Dhanu, respectively. In the month of Tulam, there was general scarcity of money in the Vaikam taluk and poor demand for cocoanuts. It was only by selling cocoanuts that the people in that taluk were paying the tax due from them. Very few people had sufficient paddy for sale.

The member next spoke about certain changes necessary in the existing arrangements for the registration of vital statistics. The existing system of registration was defective in that it was based on oral information furnished and was therefore unreliable. In view to ensure correctness of the statistics and make them more useful to the public, he suggested that legislation should be undertaken for maintaining in each Taluk office an up-to-date register showing the name, age, etc., of each member of every tax-paying family. Subsequent births or deaths should be intimated *in writing* to the Tahsildars concerned by the senior member of the family within a month of the event. The guardians of minors, and the major members of every family should have the power to have the names of the minors or majors, as the case may be, included in the register. Objections, if any, should be enquired into and disposed of. Those whose names were not so included should have no right whatsoever in the families concerned. Branches of families separated by partition should be separately entered. The scheme, if adopted, would prevent

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